STRONGLY RECOMMENDED

Where common sense meets safety

- Infants, children and all non-swimmers should wear life jackets while on docks or near open water.
- When boating in cold water, life jackets should be worn at all times (legs and arms can become numb, making it difficult to swim or even stay afloat).

CHECK FOR PROPER FIT

Adults - the touchdown test

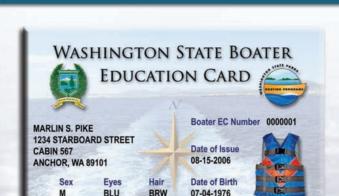
- With the jacket on, raise your arms as though signaling a touchdown.
- Look to the left and then to the right, making sure the jacket doesn't hit the chin.

Children - three inch rule

- With the child standing normally, arms at sides, grab the shoulders of the life jacket and lift up.
- If you can move the life jacket more than three inches up (or above the ears), it doesn't fit properly. How high the jacket rides is how it will fit them in the water.
- · Straps should be snug.

Remember, it is only a life jacket if you wear it!

GET ON BOARD! GET YOUR BOATER CARD TODAY!



For more information, visit online at www.parks.wa.gov/boating or contact:
Information Center
(360) 902-8844
infocenter@parks.wa.gov

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

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All Washington state parks are developed and maintained for the enjoyment of all people.

To request this brochure in an alternative format, please call (360) 902-8844 or the Washington Telecommunications
Relay Service at (800) 833-6388.

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WASHINGTON STATE PARKS



LIFE JACKET GUIDE

Wear IT Washington





BOATING Solo Clean VOP PR

PROGRAMS

FAST FACT

It only takes 60 seconds for an adult to drown and 20 seconds for a child. Almost 85% of those who drown were not wearing a life jacket!

WHAT'S THE LAW?

Washington state law requires that all recreational boats, including those in canoes and kayaks, must have a U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) approved Type I, II, III or V life jacket for each person on board.

HOW MANY DO WE NEED ON BOARD?

All vessels (including canoes and kayaks) must have at least one USCG-approved Type I, II, or III life jacket (PFD) for each person on board. In addition to the above requirement, one USCG-approved Type IV (throwable) PFD must be on board vessels 16 feet or longer. Canoes and kayaks are exempt from this requirement. Children 12 years old and younger must wear a USCG-approved life jacket at all times when underway in a vessel less than 19 feet in length, unless they are in a fully enclosed area. Each person on board a personal watercraft (PWC) and anyone being towed behind a vessel must wear a Type I, II, or III USCG-approved life jacket. Inflatable life jackets are not recommended for these activities. A Type V life jacket may be substituted for any other type if it is specifically approved by the USCG for the activity at hand and is being worn.

REMEMBER FOUR IMPORTANT THINGS ABOUT LIFE JACKETS:

- All life jackets must be U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) approved and marked with the USCG approval number.
- 2. All life jackets must be in good and working condition.
- 3. All life jackets must be readily accessible, which means you are able to put the life jacket on quickly in an emergency.
- 4. Life jackets must always be the proper size for the intended wearer. Sizing for life jackets is based on body weight and chest size. Always check the label.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF LIFE JACKETS?

THERE ARE FIVE:

Type I - life preserver

- Most buoyant; turns the unconscious wearer face-up
- Intended for offshore or open waters where quick rescues may be unlikely





Type II - buoyant vest

- Less buoyant than Type I
- Intended for calm, inland water where there is a good chance of quick rescue

Type III - flotation aid

- Same buoyancy as Type II
- Intended for calm, inland water where there is a good chance of rescue; more comfortable and available in a wide variety designs for specialized boating activities.



Type IV - throwable device

- · Least buoyant
- Designed to be thrown to someone overboard
- Of little use to unconscious or exhausted swimmers
- Not recommended for children or non-swimmers

<u>Type V - inflatable device</u>

- Very comfortable to wear but require careful attention to the condition of the device and CO2 cartridge.
- Not allowed for use by children under the age of 16
- Read the label carefully; some inflatable life jackets are not approved for certain activities.

Infant/Child Life Jackets

- A crotch strap prevents the life jacket from slipping off.
- An oversized float collar keeps the head above water.
- A grab loop makes it easy to remove an infant/child from the water.

Hybrid (foam and inflation)

- Contains built-in flotation and an inflatable chamber.
- When inflated, it has buoyancy equal to Type I, II, III.

COAST GUARD APPROVAL

 Life jackets must be U.S. Coast Guard approved and the right size for the intended wearer.



 Approval is shown by a stencil marking or tag. It shows the amount of flotation, the type, the size and approved activities or any limitations for use.